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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the thesis that there is an emerging independence of role and a developing professionalism among Australian public school principals. Promotion to the principalship in Australia's state educational systems has traditionally been achieved through seniority; a systematic, orderly, upward progression from teacher to principal was assumed provided all assessments conducted en route were favorable. In recent years the states have begun to appoint some principals on the basis of specialized knowledge, skills, or experience, and others are being promoted on the basis of merit rather than seniority. These changes have also affected the principal's role. Formerly a representative of an entrenched state bureaucracy accepting direction from above, the principal is now expected to exhibit more individual initiative, take more responsibility, and act more autonomously. Interest in participative management has also grown. The professional development of administrators has rapidly become a critical concern and programs are emerging across the nation. To encourage and focus these changes in the principalship, the Australian Commonwealth Schools Commission authorized four studies of the principalship and of professional development programs. All of these developments provide grounds for optimism, though it is clear that a great deal of improvement remains to be achieved. Appendixes provide lists of criteria for promotion by merit and a chart illustrating areas for professional development. (PGD)

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UP AND OVER WITH THE PRINCIPALSHIP DOWN UNDER?

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In this paper the author examines the thesis that there is an emerging independence of role and a developing professionalism in Australian public school principals. Appointment/promotion to the principalship in the respective State systems has traditionally been achieved through seniority, i.e. a systematic, orderly, upwards progression from teacher to principal was ensured provided all assessments conducted en route were favourable. In a review of recent developments in the six States the author points to changes in appointment and promotion procedures, the changing role of the principal, and the emergence of more programs of professional development. The role of the Commonwealth Schools Commission in encouraging research into the nature of the principalship is also acknowledged.

INTRODUCTION

In spite of its apparently gimmicky title it is intended in this paper to indicate by appropriate metaphor developments that are taking place within the principalship of Australian public schools. An accumulation of evidence gathered from the six State (i.e. government or public) education systems suggests that, after generations of "standing still", the role of principalship is at last "picking itself up" and bracing to go over the hitherto insurmountable hurdle of role independence and professionalism.

In order to examine this thesis this paper is divided into four sections. In the first of these a description is presented of the "traditional" means by which a teacher becomes a Principal of a public school. In the following (major) section some of the developments that have taken place in recent years in appointment procedures and in professional development activities are outlined, together with a commentary on the changes in role of the Principal. Mention is next made of four important reports on the principalship sponsored by the Commonwealth Schools Commission, and finally some brief comments are made relating to the significance and the limitations of this paper.

THE TRADITIONAL PATH TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP

Before examining the process by which teachers in the Australian State systems of education have traditionally "ascended" to the principalship, brief mention should be made of the terms selection, appointment, and promotion. Although the process of selection logically precedes the appointment of one to the principalship, the term can sometimes be used as a precedent of promotion. Similarly, promotion and appointment may be used to connote the same process, e.g. promotion from teacher to Principal or appointment from teacher to Principal. Promotion may also refer to the "upgrading" of a Principal's classification (and salary) as he/she moves "up" to a larger school. To avoid any further detailed (and unnecessary) differentiation of the terms according to different uses in the respective States, the terms hereafter will be used interchangeably.

In New South Wales the procedures one must follow in order to move, e.g. from teacher to Principal of a State high school, are clearly defined. Movement "up" the hierarchical ladder is dependent upon satisfactory inspections by officers of the Education Department, the availability of "suitable" schools, and the ordered queuing of aspirants.

For example, for a teacher who has already achieved List 1 status, a satisfactory inspection will enable him/her to be placed (in chronological order of approval) on the waiting list for a List 2 position, i.e. that person is entitled to take up appointment as head of department (Faculty) in a high school. When that teacher's name comes to the top of the list he/she may then apply for vacant headships as they are advertised by the Department of Education. On taking up such an appointment the teacher's name is then entered on List 2.

After five years' experience a head of department may seek through inspection admission to the waiting list for List 3, i.e. deputy principalship. The same procedure is followed until eventually an appointment is taken up. (It is at this level, however, that extensive delays to promotion are being experienced. Currently there are approximately 1,000 heads of department waiting to take up deputy positions but only approximately 50 vacancies occur each year!). After two years as deputy principal one may seek admission to List 4 and the right thereafter to apply for the principalship.

The "orderliness" of the listing system may be disturbed in two ways. For example, a person eligible for promotion may defer such and extend his/her period on the top of a list for several years by waiting for a vacancy to occur in an "acceptable" (i.e. more desirable) school. Conversely, a teacher may achieve an accelerated promotion by accepting an executive post in an unpopular (e.g. isolated) school or region. After three years in such a post he/she becomes eligible to apply for a position in (what is perceived to be) more salubrious surroundings! Thereafter, his/her name remains ahead of those "jumped" on the list.

The systematic and orderly upwards progression may also be disturbed by the transfer option, i.e. when an executive position becomes vacant those

already holding an equivalent post in other schools have first choice in the appointment to such.

Sharpe (1976) compared the procedures for selecting high school principals in New South Wales with those used in an Oregon school system. In his commentary on the former Sharpe pointed out that eligibility for such is based on the minimum qualifications of a bachelor's degree and a teacher's certificate (normally awarded after four years of training and one satisfactory year of teaching). But, he observed that:

> There are no requirements relating to graduate study nor to any compulsory hours in educational administration. In fact, a large majority of high school principals in the state have no university qualifications beyond the bachelor's degree and have no exposure to the theory of administration. Implicit to the system is a skepticism about the practical value of university training in administration and an immense trust in on-the-job experience and in-service training to develop administrative skills (1976:18).

Sharpe also observed how the step-by-step path followed to the principalship - progression, emphasis on regulations, basic minimum requirements, time spent in various positions, merit, seniority - fulfilled all the hallmarks associated with succession in a bureaucracy. Furthermore, Sharpe pointed to an assumption then - and still- untested within the New South Wales (and other States) system:

> An important and wholly untested assumption ... is that success as a principal depends on having shown competency at each level of the system. An incompetent or mediocre teacher can never obtain List 2, no matter how excellent in matters of administration. Nor can a deputy principal who is not at home with certain elements of school organization hope to attain the principalship even though those specific skills may not be vital to that new role. Thus each step is thought to offer indispensable experience for the next, and no provision is made for by-passing any rungs on the ladder (1976:19).

The foregoing description of entry to the principalship of a State high school in New South Wales will come as no surprise to teachers in all other State education systems in Australia. The procedures enacted in the "premier" State do not differ significantly from those that have long been followed in

other States. (The outcomes of these procedures are to be seen documented in the two reports by Chapman (1983) on the selection of principals and the profiles of such. Similarities and differences in selection procedures in N.S.W. and Queensland are reported by Muscio (1983).) In fact the genesis of such promotional paths lies substantially within the so-called free, compulsory, secular Education Acts that the Australian States (then colonies) promulgated in the 1870s and 1880s and, especially, within the public service-type regulations that were attached to such.

The linkage between public service and State Education Departments (and especially the outcomes of such) is probably worthy of detailed study alone. Suffice it here, however, to say that with the few exceptional periods of "manpower" shortage in which accelerated appointment/promotion has been possible, the hundred years that have passed following the passage of the respective Education Acts have witnessed a remarkably ordered and systematic path to the principalship. Basic to this feature of Australian public education have been the principles of exclusion of system "outsiders", seniority, queuing and attrition. Accelerated or meritorious promotion was substantially prevented. Death or retirement of principals -- particularly when premature -- became somewhat ironically the spice of life for upward-mobile and impatient deputies!

Carlson (1979), in his study of career structures and barriers to career paths or promotions, compared those that operated in a public school system in Oregon with those in the State systems of Western Australia and New South Wales. He pointed to the three ingredients of manpower flow policies -- hierarchy of positions, differentiated salary scales, and barriers to an orderly career. Although the hierarchy makes it possible to trace out an orderly career path, certain barriers must nevertheless be overcome in order to achieve this, e.g. assessment of efficiency/effectiveness, evaluation, formal level of education achieved, seniority, experience, and personal attributes. Carlson observed that in Western Australia and New South Wales the major career barriers were seniority and experience. For teachers in these systems an orderly career path was predictable and likely. By way of contrast, career barriers in the Oregon system were less clear. Apart from the requirements for specified personal levels of education teachers could not be guaranteed promotion because of the ill-defined, informal career barriers that had to be surmounted.

In Australian State systems tales abound of outstanding teachers destined to make (so it was assumed) their marks as equally outstanding administrators but who quit education for careers elsewhere because of their unsatisfied impatience for promotion. Although the extent of such wastage (perhaps a more appropriate term than attrition!) has never been precisely documented, the acceptance of such has inevitably cast some doubt on the quality of public school principals as a group. Are they really the "cream of the crop" -- the best of teachers now responsible for the induction and development of others -- or are they more appropriately described in general as the survivors -- the patient ones, those who perceived that their pathway to the top was best pursued by a role performance that emphasized comformity rather than diversity, caution rather than risk-taking, conservatism rather than innovativeness? Perhaps the answers will never be provided with any acceptable degree of certitude. In any case, procedures that are now being developed in some of the State systems would suggest that such will not be the case in future.

TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP : VARIATIONS IN PROCEDURES

In this, the major section of this paper, three themes are discussed. First, changes in appointment/promotion procedures are outlined; second, the emerging role of the principalship is reviewed; and, third, the increasingly important place of professional development is considered.

Appointment and Promotion

Arguably one of the earliest and most significant departures from the customary mode of Principal-selection was that introduced by the South Australian Education Department in the early 1970s. This scheme provided for a limited number of special category principalships, e.g. 20 per annum. Positions were openly and publicly advertised (as compared with the customary procedure of internal notification in Departmental bulletins) and often indicated the Department's desire to appoint principals with certain skills and/or experiences to schools wherein specific needs or problems had been

identified. This procedure thus made possible the appointment of principals from other State systems, independent schools, and even other countries.

In Western Australia, acting on the recommendations of the Beazley Report (1984) (and particularly recommendations 126, 127, 128 and 133), the Department of Education has recently moved to introduce promotion by merit. This scheme does not open appointment possibilities to "outsiders". It does, however, make accelerated promotion possible in both primary and secondary schools. The scheme is being phased-in and by 1987, for example, the promotion-by-merit procedure will be used to fill 75 percent and 50 percent of available positions in Class 1 and Class 2 primary schools respectively. A similar scheme will be followed in secondary schools.

The refereeing and evaluation process represents somewhat of a startling departure from the public-service inspired secrecy of the past. For example, applicants for principalships in Class 1 primary schools must nominate referees able to comment on "their work in schools" during the preceding two to three years. Included must be (i) a Regional Superintendent (current or recent), (ii) another Superintendent, (iii) two or three Deputy Principals or Senior Assistants (one of whom will be selected), and (iv) five teachers (of whom two will be selected to submit reports).

In 1985 one superordinate's report (in this case a Superintendent) was made available to each applicant for promotion-by-merit. In 1986 this practice has been expanded and the reports from both superordinates are available to the applicant to peruse. This procedure is causing some concern among Principals, for example, whose reports on their deputies applying for Class 2 school principalships will be "open" for the first time. Referees are required to comment on and rank applicants in terms of specific criteria. Four categories of "evidence" are expected on behalf of applicants for high school principalships -- communication, decision-making, educational leadership, and management skills (see Appendix 1); two categories are required for prospective primary school principals -- teaching and professional leadership, the latter of which is sub-divided into decision-making and school leadership and management skills (see Appendix 2).

In Victoria, as part of the system-wide changes in the structure and operation of the State education system, responsibility for the selection of new Principals has been lodged with school councils. This development represents what may best be described as the most radical departure from a

century-old tradition of centralized appointments. The resultant changes in expectations of the role of principals (and councils) have been of considerable moment and are referred to later in this section.

In New South Wales, the most populous of the Australian States, the selection/promotion of principals continues essentially in terms of the traditional public service model exemplified in the anecdote that introduced this section. Nevertheless, the existing selection/promotion structure has been a topic of considerable discussion and is, in fact, currently under review by the Department of Education. Some added flexibility in selection procedures is a likely outcome. Telfer and Swann (1986) have evaluated several promotion structures in terms of four criteria that emerge from the theories of motivation expounded by Mazlow, Herzberg, and Alderfer. The criteria established are the extent to which a promotion structure (i) acts as a source of intrinsic motivation, (ii) is a source of job enrichment, (iii) allows for and encourages participative management, and (iv) offers non-administrative career paths. Telfer and Swann conclude that the existing promotion structure for Principals of High Schools fails to satisfy any of these criteria; the structure proposed by the N.S.W. Department of Education in its Discussion Paper (1978) advocated measures to meet all of the criteria except non-administrative career paths but did not suggest practical means of achieving these objectives; the policies of the N.S.W. Teachers' Federation (1980) could not be fully appraised until they were formulated into a concrete proposal; and the proposal by the Institute of Inspectors (1979) went closest towards satisfying all criteria except that of participative management.

Changing Roles

Under its traditional structure of centralized public education the principalship served as an extension of the control of the respective State Education Departments. Principals were supported by the strength of an imposing bureaucracy and guided by the comprehensive prescriptiveness of Departmental rules and regulations. And although it may be argued that principals never adequately explored the limits of their autonomy, the overbearing position of the employing authorities made such a proposition largely unnecessary. Seniority and orderly progression produced their rewards, not the least of which was the cocoon-like security provided by the respective Departments of Education. There is now, however, much evidence that the role of the Principal is undergoing significant change. Nowhere is this more evident than Victoria wherein is currently taking place the most

intensive attempt to redesign and restructure a State education system.

The decentralization of Victorian education and the resultant devolution of authority to the local school level goes well beyond the States' regionalization schemes implemented in early post second world war years. Several reports have appeared addressing aspects of the Victorian "movement". The paper presented by Chapman and Boyd (1985) is to date one of the most important contributions to an understanding of the changing role of the Principal.

The Victorian "initiative" has inter alia mandated from the "top down" greater community and teacher participation in school development, curriculum improvement, and budgetary decisions. The process -- the outcome of deliberations by two governments of different political persuasions -- has involved such structural changes as the reorganization of central office, and the expansion of responsibilities of regional offices in the provision of services to their schools. The resultant changes in Principals' responsibilities have led to diminished contact with the former and increased association with the latter office. But the changes in the Principals' roles have not ended there. The emphasis placed by the Labor government (which took office in 1982) on devolution of authority, the collaborative decision-making process, and one's responsiveness to the needs of the immediate community, have had the most profound effects. Chapman and Boyd list several of these and, in so doing, blame the inadequacy of the implementation process -- the change strategy -- for many of the difficulties that are being experienced by Principals adapting to the new demands of their role and to some of the ambiguities that have emerged. That such an extensive change has produced its "winners" and "losers" there is no doubt. This has been clearly documented by Peebles (1986).

Against a backdrop of increased autonomy the Principals studied by Chapman and Boyd reported several changes to which they found difficulty in adapting. For example, all Principals must play a more public role and, as such, spend more time away from their schools than previously. Some indicated that their closer association with regional offices had not been accompanied by more efficient support services -- the reverse was in fact noted in many cases; some expressed concern at the added pressures on them to succeed as leaders in the development of curriculum. Others reported that their power had been eroded, that their decision-making discretion had been limited, and that the participative decision-making mode and the resulting plethora of committee

meetings take more of their time. Others were ill-at-ease in balancing collaborative and supervisory roles; some admitted they lacked the skills necessary to adapt to the "new" administrative style.

Fortunately, the problems of participative management have not been ignored. Tasmania has provided a model for the introduction of a collaborative approach to policy making, planning, budgeting, and evaluation in schools. The model -- the Collaborative School Management Cycle -- was outlined in that phase of the Effective Resource Allocation in Schools Project (ERASP) that involved case studies of highly effective schools. ERASP was a joint endeavour of the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Centre for Education at the University of Tasmania, supported as a Project of National Significance by the Commonwealth Schools Commission. The purposes of the project were

> to identify the processes and skills which are required for the effective allocation of resources in government and non-government schools and to establish a program for the assessment and development of the requisite skills among those in, or preparing for, positions of responsibility. The identification of processes and skills required, first, the nomination of schools considered highly effective in both a general sense and in the manner in which resources were allocated and, second, the careful study of practices related to resource allocation in such schools.

(It should be noted that although resources were initially conceived narrowly in the fiscal sense a broader and more appropriate view emerged during the project.)

The Cooperative School Management Cycle has been adopted for use in Victoria and to date has been implemented in approximately 500 schools. It is proving most helpful in shaping the Principal's role vis-a-vis the expanded powers of school councils. The model is also currently on trial in Western Australia.

Professional Development

A feature of all Australian State education systems that has become clearly identifiable in recent years has been the recognition of the

importance of planned, professional development activities for school principals. Australian principals have recognized the urgency for such programs and, through their professional associations, have taken the initiative in establishing a variety of institutions and activities. Some of these have been very localised in structure and focus; many programs enjoy the full weight of Departmental encouragement and backing.

Docker (1985) has described how, since 1982, the Education Department of Tasmania, with the support of professional associations and teachers' unions, has cooperated with the University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian State Institute of Technology in conducting developmental programs for educationists. The Centre for Continuing Education of Teachers (CCET), responsible for such programs, is a collaborative management group representing these three institutions. Staffed and funded by the Education Department and supported by staff from the participating institutions, CCET provides in-service courses to Tasmanian Education which

(i) provide skills and knowledge in areas relevant to the perceived needs of the 350 senior masters/mistresses in Tasmania;

(ii) examine, discuss and provide alternative solutions for some problems facing secondary education;

(iii) include intellectual rigour in studies to ensure that theory could be applied in practice;

(iv) provide a quality professional development experience to school management personnel in mid-career; and

(v) enable course participants to upgrade qualifications.

Courses are offered in three intensive weeks with each course week separated by four to eight weeks on-the-job. Each course participant is confronted by "high quality, rigorous and relevant professional development exercises" which may be credited towards further qualifications, e.g. the bachelor and master of education degrees at both the University and the Institute of Technology.

In Queensland, where selection/appointment procedures still adhere very much to the traditional Departmental model, many programs have been developed to cater for people "at various steps on the ladder". This is particularly

noticeable in State primary education (Cullen, 1986) where the Education Department sponsors programs for recently appointed Deputy and Assistant Principals. Highest priority, however, is given to induction seminars for (i) "Beginning Principals" (i.e. moving from teaching staff to the principalship of a school for the first time) introduced in 1977, and (ii) "Principals on Promotion (i.e. moving to a larger class of school) introduced in 1982.

Both seminars are held in residence and last for five days. Pre-seminar tasks, critical examination of current practices, action-planning, etc. are features of these programs. In addition, several other types of seminar are conducted, e.g. for Principals in special schools, senior Principals in need of professional "refreshment", etc. Education Regions also conduct programs and activities for Principals. These reflect, to a large degree, the desires of local Principal Associations which generally conduct such seminars with financial support from the Regional offices.

South Australian education also provides an example of the successful outcome of agitation by the State Primary Principals' Association for a program of professional development for its members. O'Callaghan (1986) has described the genesis of such a program in 1976. Structured by the principals in two residential weeks separated by three weeks return to the job, the initial programs stressed independence from the employing authority, contributions by practitioners, pairing of participants who with a consultant selected projects for analysis, and the establishment of networks. The success of these initial activities was noticed by the Department of Education who took over the administration of such -- the Principals Professional Development Program (PPDP) -- but retained the key features of the learning model involved. O'Callaghan and Crisp (1984), in their comprehensive review of Australian training programs for school administrators, observed that "Award" courses (e.g. at University level) adopted a more "administrative" viewpoint while "informal" programs (such as the PPDP) followed a "managerial" emphasis.

> No doubt the difference in the time required to complete a programme in comparison to more leisurely pace required before graduating in formal course work contributed to this difference, but PPDP styled programmes generally restricted membership to principals while tertiary courses were open to all students. Ownership of a PPDP programme focussed content upon participants' needs whereas formal course

work was based upon the literature and research. Notwithstanding this difference many formal courses researched the needs of principals and the participant owned programmes (like PPDP) broadened their horizons to research and theory.

The problem of balancing "theory and practice" was addressed from the outset by the Institute of Educational Administration which was established in 1977 by the Victorian government. Designed to provide programs in educational administration for persons involved in the decision-making processes in schools, the I.E.A. conducted its first four week residential program in 1978. From the outset each program has been conducted for the first two weeks by a prominent Australian or overseas consultant. During this period a major theme is introduced and developed thus providing a basis for the work activities conducted by several consultants during the second fortnight. Emphasis has always been on the inductive approach to learning; lecturing is afforded only a small proportion of class-room time; simulation, role-playing, group work, etc. are the major conduits to learning. In this way the I.E.A. has succeeded admirably in solving the discrepancies of theory and practice that are perceived by so many school administrators.

In 1980 the I.E.A. was made a Statutory Authority within the Victorian Ministry of Education. In spite of severe fiscal restrictions the Institute has flourished, it has expanded its range of programs to involve the whole school community, i.e. students, teachers, parents, and Principals, thus contributing to the solution of some of the problems and uncertainties created by the restructuring/devolution movement within State education in Victoria. The Institute's work is widely acclaimed and it enjoys a well-justified national and international reputation.

COMMONWEALTH SCHOOLS COMMISSION INVOLVEMENT

In the preceding sections evidence gathered largely from specific State sources has been marshalled to support the thesis that the principalship in Australian public education has entered a phase of significant change, particularly with regard to appointment/selection procedures, professional development activities, and the nature of the task itself. Further evidence of these changes and, in fact, of the recognition of the desirability of such, is to be found in a series of reports commissioned by the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

In 1982 the Australian Commonwealth Schools Commission introduced a major project concerned with the professional development of Principals in State and Independent schools. It established a working party whose members represented, inter alia, Principals, education systems, and employing authorities. The aims of this project were to

(i) foster positive educational leadership and support in schools and the community;

(ii) bring about heightened awareness and understanding of the role of the Principal in providing educational leadership;

(iii) make employing systems and Principals aware of a variety of professional development schemes to assist the development and refinement of leadership skills; and

(iv) assist in the development and improvement of employing system support for the professional development of Principals.

Four studies were commissioned in order to

(i) develop a descriptive profile of Principals of schools in both the State and Independent sectors throughout Australia;

(ii) identify the procedures which are currently used in appointing Principals;

(iii) identify the programs currently available for the professional development of Australian Principals; and

(iv) investigate the role expectations of Principals and identify the factors which influence their work situations.

The first two studies were conducted by Judith Chapman of Monash University and completed in 1983. The studies, alluded to in an earlier section of this paper, were, predictably, descriptive in their findings. Accordingly, they provide a valuable source of information -- representative of all Australian schools -- as to the processes of selection and to the characteristics of those selected for the Principalship.

The third study (also referred to above) was conducted by O'Callaghan and Crisp with the support of the Australian Council for Educational Admininistration. It was completed in 1984 and represents a significant updating and elaboration of the surveys conducted by Thomas in 1978 and 1980. O'Callaghan and Crisp present in detail a picture of the facilities available in Australia for training associated with the Principalship. Again, this report is largely descriptive in format, but it too provides a valuable source of information relevant to contemporary Australian programs in educational administration.

The fourth project was conducted by Duignan et al. from the University of New England's Centre for Administrative and Higher Education Studies. Presented in 1984, the study had

(i) examined the role expectations of Principals that were held by Principals themselves and by others in the school community;

(ii) identified the roles actually carried out by Principals;

(iii) identified the professional development needs of Principals;

(iv) identified those factors (both facilitating and constraining) which impinge on the role; and

(v) examined the relationship between the role of the Principalship and the effectiveness of his/her school.

The study involved interviews with Principals, parents, teachers, and students from all six States and the two Territories. A questionnaire was completed by 1,054 Principals across the nation and a series of case studies was also developed. The findings of Duignan's study (which are encapsulated in several recommendations) are too extensive to report in this paper. Suffice it to say, however, that the report will have a significant impact on the design and delivery of training programs for school administrators in Australia. In particular, the "framework for the professional development of school Principals" developed by Duignan and his colleagues (see Appendix 3) will contribute to this area.

CONCLUSION

To the reader -- particularly if he/she is from North America -- there may occur some mystification as to the importance of the remarks contained in this paper. To understand fully the significance of such, one must first of all be aware of the traditional structure of Australian public education. Public or State education "down under" caters for approximately 75 percent of children in schools. What must be appreciated is that the centralized nature of Australian education means that there are only six public systems in operation (omitting mention of the two territorial authorities) -- and not a plethora of school systems within each State. Accordingly, the introduction of virtually any change by a Department of Education is a change for all schools in that State. Thus, in terms of all the developments mentioned in the preceding sections of this paper, one is considering large-scale, State-wide change. The potential significance of each change is therefore increased greatly.

Similarly, the foreign reader may experience difficulty in attaching any degree of significance to the nature, scope, and frequency of the changes outlined unless he/she has some awareness of the history of Australian public education. Although one risks oversimplifying the situation, there are valid grounds for making the observation that for the greater part of a century (following the introduction of the free, compulsory, secular Education Acts) few changes took place in the standardized procedures for selection of Principals. Within the relatively brief space of the last ten-fifteen years, however, several new and significant practices have emerged at a seemingly exponential rate.

That the principalship in Australian public education is confronting the hurdle of added professionalism and independence there seems little doubt. The extent to which it has cleared the hurdle may still be debated, however. For example, in Victoria, the location of arguably the widest-ranging changes in the structure of public education, an inadequate strategy of change may have caused many Principals to crash into rather than clear the hurdle in which case, perhaps, it is time to step back and try again! Similarly, some grounds for pessimism may be found in the observation that no State Department as yet requires an appointee to the principalship to have completed a University or College of Advanced Education qualification.

Obviously, the independence of the State systems ensures that there will be a variety of changes, different aspects of the respective systems will be

subject to change at different times, and the speed and frequency of change will vary considerably from Department to Department. Notwithstanding these factors, there does appear justification in reviewing collectively the developments taking place in Australian public education and, in particular, in the nature of the principalship. Overall the picture that emerges gives reason for optimism among those who for so long have bemoaned the apparent neglect of this important administrative post. Changes in roles, selection procedures, and professional development practices -- all largely still within the ambit of State Departmental control, the recent contributions of the reports funded by the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the activities of Principals' Associations (whose work has not been afforded the space justified in a paper such as this), wide-ranging University and C.A.E.-based research (also not reported herein), and the significant expansion in University and C.A.E. programs, have all combined to provide some justification for answering in the affirmative the question asked in the title of this paper.

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APPENDIX 1

PROMOTION BY MERIT TO THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL IN HIGH AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS CLASS 1 PRIMARY SCHOOLS CLASS 1A AND 1

APPENDIX: DESCRIPTION OF THE CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION BY MERIT

Form PM 100A

GENERAL

This statement should serve as a guide to referees when deciding on ratings in Section E. Each attribute listed in Section E is briefly described below. It is not intended that the description should be regarded as exhaustive. The purpose is to provide a common basis for evaluating the important qualities required of persons seeking promotion by merit to Principal.

1. Communication

Effective leaders are good communicators. Important to good communications are aspects that include:

a. The school community being kept informed of school activities and educational issues.

b. The educational goals of the school evolving from wide discussion.

c. Communication being a two-way process.

d. Informal discussion being encouraged and welcomed.

e. Provision for student input into school decision making.

f. Sensitivity to the need to communicate with and listen to the school community.

g. Awareness of the structures needed to develop democratic decision making in a school

h. Contributing where necessary to the development of the skills needed to be an active participant in school decision making.

2. Decision Making

Effective leaders are good decision makers. They ensure adequate planning precedes action; make use of evidence and base decisions on considered alternatives, after input from the school community. Decisions are made with the interests of students paramount. Aspects to be considered include the ability to:

a. Establish procedures that allow members of the school community with interest and expertise to participate in collective decision making.

b. Take into account the views of parents, staff, students, employers and the wider community.

c. Promote a sense of togetherness (team building).

d. Actively seek ideas from others as well as proposing new ideas

3. Educational Leadership

Effective leaders have a professional commitment to their task. Goals that are set should be democratically determined within the context of Education Regulations and Policy and their implementation should involve the school community utilizing the different skills and abilities of the people available.

A principal must have sound educational values reflected in a concern for the intellectual, physical, social and emotional wellbeing of students and staff.

Other aspects to consider about the applicant include an ability to:

a. Contribute to the development of a good school tone.

b. Promote tolerance among the members of the school community.

c. Involve the school community in the life of the school.

d. Delegate authority effectively.

e. Be a leader in at least some aspects of the school curriculum.

f. Ensure staff are kept abreast of educational change through inservice provision (school based and externally).

g. Be willing to accept professional tasks that may lie outside the day to day activities of the school.

4. Management Skills

An effective principal must have well developed administrative skills. These should include an ability to:

a. Ensure the most efficient use of the strengths of the various members of the school community.

b. Develop a working knowledge of the internal and external financial and other resources available to the school and how they can best be employed in the interests of the school.

c. Ensure that the material possessions of the school (gym, ovals, library etc.) are optimally used and available not only to the students and staff but to community groups.

APPENDIX 2

PROMOTION BY MERIT TO THE POSITION OF DEPUTY PRINCIPAL HIGH/SENIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL DISTRICT HIGH CLASS II PRIMARY CLASS II

APPENDIX: DESCRIPTION OF THE CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION BY MERIT

Form PM 200A

GENERAL

The Statement should serve as a guide to referees when deciding on ratings in Section E. Each attribute listed in Section E is briefly described below. It is not intended that the description should be regarded as exhaustive. The purpose is to provide a common basis for evaluating the important qualities required of persons seeking promotion by merit to Principal or Deputy Principal.

1. TEACHING

Quality of the Teacher's Relationship with Students.

Factors to be considered include the teacher's:

a. empathy and rapport with students
b. ability to develop in students a constructive approach to learning
c. response to student needs
d. ability to gain the respect of students
e. respect for and development of students' self-worth.

Planning and Preparation

Factors to be considered include:

a. evidence of thoughtful planning and preparation
b. maintenance of appropriate student records
c. provision for diagnostic, remedial and enrichment activities
d. use of appropriate resources.

Teaching Skills

a. maintaining the interest and attention of students
b. clarity of explanations and directions
c. use of sound questioning techniques
d. provision for student participation in lessons
e. provision in teaching strategies for different levels of student ability
f. use of content and examples meaningful in local context
g. use of language appropriate to student level of development

Classroom Management

Teacher achieves:

a. routines for effective teaching
b. orderly transition from one activity to another
c. effective supervision of all pupils whilst working with individuals or groups
d. positive, flair and consistent discipline
e. flexibility in dealing with different situations and pupil behaviours

Professional Qualities

The teacher demonstrates:

a. commitment to and enthusiasm for teaching
b. Awareness of new developments and issues in education
c. involvement in the corporate life of the school
d. commitment to the development of a caring school environment
e. intellectual awareness and growth
f. appropriate use of language.

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2. PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

2.1 Decision-Making

Effective leaders are good decision-makers
Aspects to be considered include:

Encouraging Participation

a establishes procedures that allow members of the school community with interest and expertise to participate in collective decision-making

b promotes a sense of togetherness (team building)

Making Workable Decisions

a takes into account the views of staff, parents, students, employers and the wider community

b actively seeks ideas from others as well as proposing new ideas

c accepts responsibility for making of final decisions.

Achieving Effective Implementation

a sets goals that are realistic in terms of the school situation and available resources

b secures commitment of those involved in implementing decisions

Delegating Authority Effectively

a ensures that those members of the school community expected to implement decisions know what is expected and have the resources ability to carry them through

2.2 School Leadership & Management Skills

Effective leaders are good communicators.
Effective leaders have a professional commitment to their task. Aspects to be considered include:

a ensures there exist channels (newsletters, parent nights, staff meetings, circulation of minutes from meetings) for effective communication in both directions

b the school community is kept informed of school activities and educational issues

c informal discussions are encouraged and welcomed

d sound educational values reflected in a concern for the intellectual, physical, social and emotional well being of staff and students.

Setting & Achieving Educational Goals

a awareness of the structures needed to develop democratic decision-making in schools

b goals should be democratically determined within the context of the Education Act, Regulations & Policy

c goal implementation should involve utilizing the different skills and abilities of the school community

d be a leader in at least some aspects of school curriculum

e contributing where necessary to the development of the skills needed to be an active participant in school decision-making.

Staff Utilization and Supervision

a ensure staff are kept abreast of educational change through inservice provision and generally are involved in professional development

b be aware of the extra talents and knowledge of staff to ensure the full range of talents and resources available to the school are used to their optimum

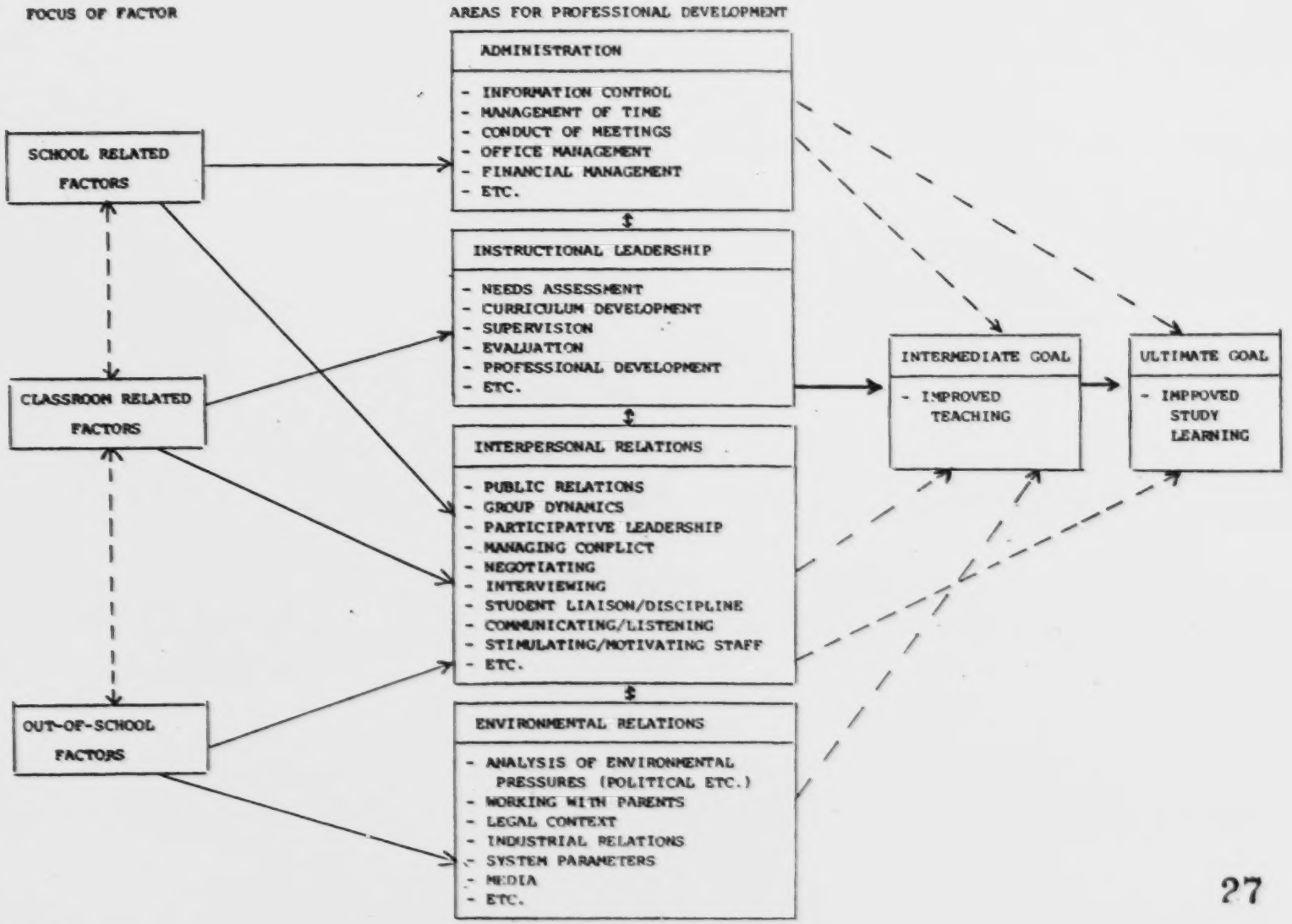
c has a style of supervision that encourages a positive commitment from staff to the educational goals of the school

d ensure the most efficient use of strengths of the various members of the school community.

Effective Contribution to the Management of School Finances & Resources

a demonstrates well developed management and administrative skills in the use of internal and external financial and other resources available to the school and how they can best be employed in the interests of the school

b ensures that the material possessions of the school (gym, ovals, libraries etc.) are optimally used and available not only to the students but to community groups


FOCUS OF FACTOR
AREAS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SCHOOL RELATED FACTORS
CLASSROOM RELATED FACTORS
OUT-OF-SCHOOL FACTORS
ADMINISTRATION
- INFORMATION CONTROL
- MANAGEMENT OF TIME
- CONDUCT OF MEETINGS
- OFFICE MANAGEMENT
- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
- ETC.
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
- NEEDS ASSESSMENT
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
- SUPERVISION
- EVALUATION
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- ETC.
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS
- PUBLIC RELATIONS
- GROUP DYNAMICS
- PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP
- MANAGING CONFLICT
- NEGOTIATING
- INTERVIEWING
- STUDENT LIAISON/DISCIPLINE
- COMMUNICATING/LISTENING
- STIMULATING/MOTIVATING STAFF
- ETC.
ENVIRONMENTAL RELATIONS
- ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURES (POLITICAL ETC.)
- WORKING WITH PARENTS
- LEGAL CONTEXT
- INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
- SYSTEM PARAMETERS
- MEDIA
- ETC.
INTERMEDIATE GOAL
- IMPROVED TEACHING
ULTIMATE GOAL
- IMPROVED STUDY LEARNING

APPENDIX 3